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TAGS: [PREL](#) [UNSC](#) [KPKO](#) [SO](#) [ET](#) [RS](#)
SUBJECT: GOR SUPPORTS UNSC RESOLUTION ON SOMALIA BUT
OPPOSES A DEFINITIVE PKO STARTING DATE

REF: STATE 134229

1. (U) This message is sensitive but unclassified, and is not meant for Internet distribution.

2. (SBU) Per reftel request, Poloff discussed the draft Security Council resolution on establishing a peacekeeping mission in Somalia with MFA Department of International Organizations First Secretary Sergey Zhdanov, and sought the GOR's support for the resolution. Zhdanov indicated that this redraft was much improved and more balanced in approach than the original version. The GOR particularly supported the proposal to establish a trust fund to provide financial support to the Africa Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and to hold a donors conference to solicit contributions to the fund.

3. (SBU) However, Zhdanov stated that the GOR was not in favor of setting a definitive starting date of June 1, 2009 for the United Nations Mission in Somalia (UNMISON), and instead preferred the more flexible language "at an appropriate time" contained in the British and French counter-proposal. While understanding and sharing the U.S. concern about a possible security vacuum in Somalia, the GOR believed that the first order of business should be to support fully the African Union mission already on the ground, so as to send a positive signal that the international community and the Security Council would not abandon the African peacekeepers. Zhdanov took note of our assurance to make every effort to support additional deployment under AMISOM in preparation for its eventual "rehatting," but expressed concern that the transition process would not be conclude by June 1 and that the security situation in Somalia would not be sufficiently conducive to a switch to a UN mandate at that time. As an aside, he noted that the proposed 10,000 troop level was probably too low to tackle the full spectrum of challenges in Somalia, but too high considering the previous peacekeeping failures in that country.

4. (SBU) Nevertheless, Zhdanov indicated that Russia was supportive of adopting a Security Council resolution on Somalia before the new year that demonstrated strong support for the AU mission and confirmed the Security Council's willingness to continue to work on an eventual "rehatting" to a UN mandate.

RUBIN